

WINTER 2006

NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PAMS PROJECT  
**New Jersey Division of Taxation**

Gap/Fit...**Development**...**Conversion**...Acceptance Testing...User Training...Cutover

## PAMS Project Moves Into Development Phase

### Did you know?

- When you need to correspond with a property owner, PAMS will produce commonly used letters and forms.
- PAMS will store and keep records of transactions from previous years so you can check the history of a parcel.



### What is PAMS?

**PAMS is a web-based assessment and tax system that will replace the outdated MOD IV system, and will provide improved tools for performing property assessment and tax collection processes.**

When the Division of Taxation selected the CLT Division of Tyler Technologies to provide their iasWorld software as New Jersey's new

Property Assessment Management System (PAMS), one of the deciding factors was the point that the product was an "off-the-shelf" system

already being used by other jurisdictions in the U.S. This doesn't mean, however, that the company can simply plug in the system and push a button. Making the system function specifically for New Jersey requires months of meetings, discussion, analysis, and programming as the vendor makes changes to the system to be sure it performs according to New Jersey statutes.

The PAMS project is entering its development phase, which will continue through the end of 2006.

*continued on page two*



Mary Mastro, Franklin Twp, Hunterdon County, and Pat Hice, City of Trenton, look on as Business Analyst Mary Sue Gmeiner reviews the local appeal process.

## First-Hand Account: Tom Efstathiou, Hunterdon County

Tom Efstathiou, Tax Administrator for Hunterdon County, has been involved with the PAMS initiative since 2001. At that time, the effort involved trying to determine what New Jersey needed to improve its outdated assessment administration system.

"We knew we needed something other than what we have," says Tom. "I had attended IAAO conferences (the International Association of Assessing Officers) and I saw that other states are way ahead of us with assessment technology."

Hunterdon County is one of three early implementers, along with Camden and Salem counties, who volunteered to install and use the new PAMS system during the first implementation. Tom sees the benefits of being involved with the process from the beginning. *continued on page two*



## Development Phase, *continued from page one*

During a recent design session in December, the project team discussed New Jersey's residential cost manual, delinquency procedures, and the conversion process for SR1A files for the early implementation counties.

The project team is closely examining processes such as how sales data is passed among the county, the local assessor, and the State. PAMS will provide an electronic means for submitting SR6 information and will allow notes to be entered online that are specific to each transaction.

The Association of Municipal Assessors of New Jersey (AMANJ) has a committee that will be working with the State

to enhance the NJ Residential Cost Manual in preparation for PAMS.

Tom Bishop, PAMS Project Manager, confirms that user participation is a key element in all stages of the PAMS project

and is quick to emphasize that the project is a cooperative effort between the vendor, the State team, and all stakeholders.

"PAMS will have an impact of great breadth and depth; the



*Linda Stewart, recently appointed Tax Administrator for Salem County, participates in a January design session.*

entire State of New Jersey will be affected at the state, county, and local levels. The involvement of collectors, assessors, and tax administrators is essential, and we have appreciated their participation."

## Tom Efstathiou, *continued from page one*

"We have to improve our processes. Administrators should be



**Tom Efstathiou,  
Hunterdon County**

brought into the process. I know we have guidelines in place, but I'm always looking for better ways to do things. "

Hunterdon has been recognized as a technology-friendly county, but they are far from the "paperless office" model.

"There is a lot that we still do manually," says Tom. "We use a lot of paper, and many of the old forms are obsolete."

Hunterdon uses technology as it is currently available to them. "My county is networked. I have access to any town's CAMA data and that's very helpful. If there is

something better out there, I'm ready for it."

Tom has participated in many of the PAMS gap and design sessions. He is looking forward to features such as linking parcels, automated correspondence, and an integrated appeal process. "I think they're going about it the right way. I have an open mind, and my county's assessors realize we need something better—something that will make our jobs easier."

**"...I SAW THAT  
OTHER STATES ARE  
WAY AHEAD OF US  
WITH ASSESSMENT  
TECHNOLOGY."**

*TOM EFSTATHIOU  
TAX ADMIN.  
HUNTERDON CO.*



## The Beginning Phases: What are we doing?

*Right on schedule, the PAMS team is finishing the design phase and is entering the development phase.*

*Just as more than 120 stakeholders were involved in discussions leading to the PAMS Request for Proposal (RFP), tax collection and assessment professionals from around the state have been involved in the gap analysis and design sessions. The Division of Taxation and the Division of Local Government Services will continue to enlist volunteers and listen to their input through all phases of the project.*

*According to Steve Sylvester, Assistant Director of Property Administration, the State is taking this opportunity to examine each procedure. "If the vendor's iasWorld system provides a better way to accomplish a business activity or objective, we may choose to do things differently that we have in the past."*

*During the development phase, the team will focus on modifications that will make the base product fit New Jersey requirements. They will also begin work on a PAMS prototype, which will provide a way for project participants to get to know the new PAMS system.*

*As you follow the progress of PAMS, you may hear software implementation terms that are unfamiliar to you. Here are some general definitions.*

**Walkthrough:** The Tyler/CLT team demonstrated the existing product to provide a detailed view of what the State purchased. The walkthrough also

identified major areas where further discussion was needed during the gap analysis.

**Gap Analysis:** During the "gap/fit" process, the Tyler/CLT team developed a "big picture" view of New Jersey procedures and noted issues of concern and consensus. For example, which New Jersey business processes are not currently addressed in the product's database structure and functionality? The purpose of the gap analysis was to list gap items that must be addressed during the development phase.

**Development:** During development, team members begin tailoring the baseline software to meet New Jersey's needs. The analysts develop a PAMS prototype and produce detailed specifications for the software changes that will result in the complete PAMS system. As questions arise, analysts review existing documentation and interview con-

tent experts to fully understand each function.

During development, analysts are working on four areas:

1. Modification Requirements
2. Report Requirements
3. Interface Requirements
4. Conversion Requirements

**Conversion:** As Tyler/CLT works through all areas of development—modification, reports, and interfaces—various preliminary conversions will occur during the development and installation of PAMS submodules.

As a result, the State will have seen the conversion of every function before the final major conversion occurs. These preliminary conversions provide the opportunity to identify and resolve issues with the data or the program before the final conversion. Old data is compared to new to verify successful results.

*Steve Sylvester, Assistant Director of Property Administration, welcomed county and municipal representatives to the walkthrough in June 2005.*





## New Jersey Division of Taxation

To schedule a speaker to inform your organization about PAMS, please contact Stephen Sylvester  
Assistant Director  
of Property Administration  
(609) 292-8822



## PAMS Phases

Gap Analysis	July 05—Oct 05
Development	Oct 05—Dec 06
Conversion	Oct 05—Aug 07
Acceptance Testing	Dec 06—Feb 07
User Training	May 07—Oct 07
Cutover	Oct 07—Dec 07

For more information about PAMS, go to

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation>

and click on PAMS.

Watch for information about PAMS coming soon on the MyNewJersey portal and through regular e-mail updates to assessors, collectors, and tax administrators.

## Municipal Liaison Team

**Municipal Liaison Team (MLT) members have been assigned to the early implementation counties and professional associations to help prepare for the transition to PAMS.**

**In general, the MLT will help communicate with each county and municipality, monitor conversion and interface activities, schedule and monitor training, and respond to questions and issues. They will also provide onsite support during significant and critical events that will take place in the first year of system operation.**

AMANJ  
NJACTB  
TCTANJ

Judy Miller  
James Purdie  
Patricia Turin

### ***Salem County***

Melissa Gorman  
Kathy Davis

### ***Camden County***

Janelle Raines  
James Purdie  
Christina Jordan  
Betty Ashton

### ***Hunterdon County***

Bobby Scott  
Judy Miller  
Jim LeBlon